



SOONER SPIRIT



A Daily Publication of the 2005 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games

Monday, May 23, 2005

We'll See If Age Has Anything To Do With It

by Jeanne Miserendino

National Programs and Special Events

There are those who absolutely dread birthdays, but the opposite is true for Bill Pinson. He was eagerly awaiting his 55th birthday since it meant he is now eligible to compete in the National Veterans Golden Age Games. This year's youngest participant, Pinson, turned 55 on May 21, just one day before the competition began.

"My family thinks it's wonderful that I came out to Norman to compete," said Pinson. "They just wish I was back home in Michigan celebrating my birthday with all of them."

Pinson, a Marine Corps veteran from Battle Creek, has always valued athletic competition. In his high school years, Pinson was an avid basketball and table tennis player. He currently stays fit bicycling, using free weights, and doing rigorous calisthenics. As a first-year participant in the Games, Pinson recognizes the true therapy of competing in athletics for aging veterans. "The Golden Age Games really give veterans an aspiration to stay healthy throughout the year," he said. "We know that if we keep in shape the whole year through, we will compete at top performance when it comes time for the event. It gives us an incentive to keep going and really live our lives to the fullest."

Pinson is currently employed as a recreation therapy assistant at the Battle Creek VA Medical Center. It was through some of his fellow co-workers in the Information Technology (IT) Department that he first learned of the Golden Age Games. "My friends in IT attend the Games every year, and just kept telling me that I have to go," said Pinson. "I really wanted to join them but I just wasn't old enough yet."



Bill Pinson, Golden Age Games newcomer from Battle Creek, Mich.

Pinson is competing in nine-ball and table tennis this week. He is anxious to see just how well he will perform when put to the test. While serving a tour of duty in Vietnam, Pinson developed a severe case of bronchitis and pneumonia. These conditions continue to affect his athletic ability today, but he is confident that his training and his competitive attitude will lead him to victory. "I'd like to make my team proud and bring the gold back home to Battle Creek," he said. The Battle Creek team is extremely happy that Pinson is finally able to join the ranks of the Golden Agers.

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Women Helping Women

by Kristi Nuckols, Hampton VA Medical Center

“When you think of veterans, you think of men,” said Brenda Hagar, President of Federally Employed Women (FEW), a bronze medal sponsor of the 2005 Games. Members of the organization from the Greater Oklahoma City Chapter are offering their support to women veterans throughout the week of the Games. The members of FEW strive to pursue the advancement of women and ensure equality in the workplace. “Once we knew there would be women veterans participating in the Games, we wanted to be here to support them,” said Tammie Kierstead, FEW’s Second Vice President for Programs.

Throughout the week, time will be devoted to women veterans offering moral support as well as personal assistance. The ladies from FEW collected donations of soap and shampoo, made the veterans’ beds before they arrived, placed welcome baskets in their rooms, and will cheer the ladies on at their competitive events.

One of approximately 32 women vets who are here this week, Melanie Downing, from Santa Monica, Calif. who is a Navy veteran who has participated in the National Veterans Golden Age Games for 14 years. When asked why she keeps coming back year after year, Downing said, “I enjoy meeting friends, the camaraderie is fantastic and I thoroughly enjoy it! I would like to see other women veterans come to the Games to show that they are capable of competing and receive more recognition than they may have received while they were in the military.”

The representatives from FEW spent some time talking with Charlene Bennett from San Diego, Calif. Bennett is a Navy veteran, mother of two and grandmother of six, and this is her third year participating in the Games. “I like to meet new people and the Games challenge me. The more activities I do, the less I think about my pain. I like the traveling, too,” said Bennett.

FEW representative Debbie Miller said, “It took independent, strong women like you to break the barriers of equality so that we may be equal today.”



Debbie Miller, FEW representative; competitor Melanie Downing of Santa Monica, Calif.; and Brenda Hagar, President of the Oklahoma City Chapter of FEW.

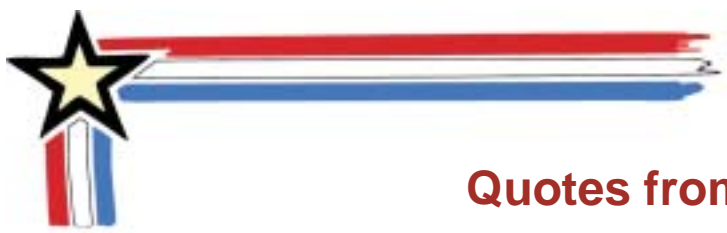
Both of these veterans have noticed an increase in the support offered to women veterans over the years. “We need more women veterans to compete,” said Downing. She has received approximately 23 medals over the past 14 years of competing in the Games. Look out guys, the women have arrived!



“Pinson,” continued from page 1

Though he had only been at the Games one day, Pinson cannot say enough about what a wonderful time he is having and the many memories he hopes to make. “I am looking forward to experiencing something I can share with my children and grandchildren, and I really encourage all eligible veterans to come out and compete,” he said. “It is truly a golden opportunity for an individual to be here.”

As the youngest participant, Pinson has much to live up to. He laughs when reminded of this and simply comments, “We’ll see if age has anything to do with it!”



Quotes from the Games

“I would like to express my sincere thanks to all those responsible for making this wonderful trip possible. This is my first Golden Age Games, and it is amazing to see the spirit and camaraderie of everyone — veterans, staff and volunteers!”

~ Anthony P. Ciminera, Lindenhurst, N.Y.

“For the past few years, it’s been kind of like a family reunion to go to the Games, and I’m looking forward to next year in Virginia. I love the Games!”

~ Clyde Harris, Ft. Worth, Texas

“I met one veteran who served in Germany in the early 1960’s and I’m trying to find anyone else who might have been there in the Army then. Although this is my first Games, I’m looking forward to coming again. If I do well this year, I’ll definitely be going to Hampton next year.”

~ Thomas Boyd, Topeka, Kan.

“I want to say that Oklahoma is ‘OK’ with me! It’s a beautiful place to hold the Games. This is my seventh Games and I’ve met again so many old friends from past years. The camaraderie is great – old and new friends together all at once.”

~ Margaret Jay, San Jacinto, Calif.

“The Games are really good. It’s my fourth time at them and it’s great to see old friends again. I hope I can go to Virginia next year. Besides the four events I’m in, I enjoy the alternate activities and am especially looking forward to the museum tour on the 26th.”

~ Fred J. Masinga, Jr., Dallas, Texas

“The opening ceremonies were great! It’s the companionship and the competition that make the Games so much fun. I’ve met so many friends from my seven years at the Games. I hope to do well in my four events, and Lord willing, I’ll be happy to go to next year’s Games.”

~ James W. Hermann, Temple, Texas

“The Games are a lot of rush, rush, rush, but that’s OK with me. It’s a great chance to get out and see people from all over the country, from Alaska to L.A. I really appreciate the great volunteers. If it weren’t for them we wouldn’t be able to be here.”

~ Thomas Clift, Norman, Okla.

“The competition really gets you fired up. You forget about your aches and pains, at least for a little while. It’s my seventh Games and it’s good to meet old friends and make new ones. It’s a great break from the routine at home.”

~ Arnold Dangerfield, Odessa, Texas

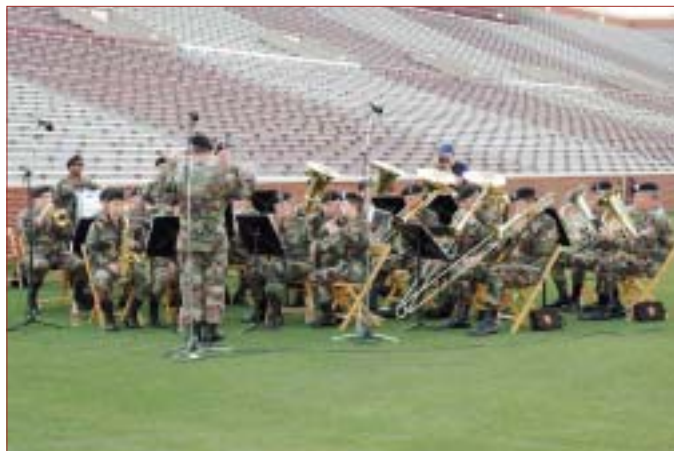
“The Games are beneficial, enlightening, uplifting and fun! Although this is my first year, I’m definitely looking forward to going to them in the future.”

~ Su Jasinski, Tulsa, Okla.





Let the Games Begin!



Music is provided by the 95th Division (IT) Band.



Ty Nelson sings a patriotic song during the Opening Ceremony.



The Opening Ceremony is held at the Gaylord Family - Oklahoma Memorial Stadium.



Dana Bowman parachutes into the stadium before speaking to the competitors and guests.



The Native American Honor Guard, made up of veterans Leland Parker, Kyle Larney, Kenny Lookingglass, Randal Bonine, Dwight Pampa and Robert Greenwood, present the colors.



**Frank Guerra
of Sanger,
Calif. takes
aim.**



**Nicola Stewart
of Clovis, Calif.
throws the
discus on
Sunday.**



**Beverly Smith of
North Babylon,
N.Y. aims at the
air rifle
competition.**



**Edward
Gagnon of
Chicopee,
Mass. goes
for Sooner
Gold.**



**Dominoes
competitor
Jerome
Moore of
Oklahoma
City, Okla.
plans his
strategy.**





Volunteers are excited to share Oklahoma hospitality with veterans, coaches, visitors and staff attending the 19th National Veterans Golden Age Games. When you enter Walker Tower, you will see the distinctive blue shirts of the volunteers who will not only provide refreshments, but will also have table games, a big screen TV and other activities for your relaxation.

Speaking of relaxation, we will have massage therapists, Jeri Hoover, CMT, and Jody Lawson, LM, CMT, on Monday and Tuesday from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Through Thursday from 1 p.m. - 7 p.m., Praxis College promises to send five student therapists who will bring their tables and will also offer free massages in the Walker Tower lobby.



The hospitality area, located in the Walker Tower lobby will be open 1 p.m. - 9 p.m. on Friday and 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., Saturday through Thursday. For further information, please stop at the Information Station or find a volunteer in the bright blue shirt.

Police and On-Site Security

Oklahoma City VA Medical Center Police will provide 24-hour, on-site security in the Forum Building. Police officers are responsible for monitoring the safety of participants at special events as well as safeguarding money, computer equipment and supplies. Contact Officer Tim Collins at (405) 640-0287 if you need police assistance.



Alternate activities transportation will depart from the front of Walker Tower. Please check at the alternate activities table for more information and departure times.



The medical support area is located on the third floor of Walker Tower, in Rooms 328 and 329W, just off the elevators. Medical support will be available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. through Thursday, May 26. It will be open until noon on Friday, May 27. Medical staff will be available 24 hours each day, but after 8 p.m., rooms 328 and 329W are for emergencies only.

Don't forget your bandanna! The *Hugs Project* has provided every veteran with a neck bandanna that can be dampened help cool you down!



Veterans History Project interviews continue through Thursday, May 26, in the Forum Bldg., Room B6, but you must schedule an appointment.

This historic project is meant to honor our nation's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of their military experience. Regardless of branch or period of service, age, military career, or experience, all veterans are invited to share it with our VHP program staff this week during the Games.

Each participant will receive a VHP tote and a DVD copy of your interview before leaving the event.

Interview times are daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

If you were unable to make an appointment during registration and would like to participate in the VHP, stop by the Forum Bldg., Room B6 at the top of each hour to see if there are appointments still available.

Native American Veterans Pow Wow

On behalf of the Warriors Group and the Oklahoma City VA Medical Center, you are invited to attend and participate in a special Native American gathering this evening from 7 p.m. -

9:30 p.m. The Warriors are a group of Native American veterans who are sponsoring a pow wow for the participants of the Golden Age Games. Pow wows are intertribal social dances celebrating the richness of Native American traditions while affirming the joy of life and the dignity of a living culture.

So welcome to Oklahoma, enjoy the dance, accept our appreciation for coming and have a safe journey back home. We are honored to have you be a part of Oklahoma and get back in touch with the heartbeat of the Earth.



Breakfast — 6 a.m. - 8 a.m.

Lunch — 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Dinner — 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

The Couch Cafeteria has many options for you to choose from. Be sure to check out all the different styles and ethnicity of food available.

How Many Carbs to Choose

A rule of thumb for calorie requirement is ten calories a day for each pound of weight. As an example, a person who weighs 160 lbs should have about 1600 calories a day. It is generally recommended that half of an individual's calorie requirements come from carbs, so half of those calories would be 800. There are four calories in each gram of carbs, and 800 divided by four is 200. So, a person weighing 160 lbs. would need about 200 carb grams per day.

To take this one step further, 15 carb grams equal one carb choice and 200 divided by 15 is 13.3. A person who weighs 160 lbs. would need about 13 carb choices per day. It is recommended that carbs be distributed evenly throughout the day, so this would allow four choices for breakfast, four for lunch, four for dinner and one more choice for a snack. What a math exercise!



The state song, Oklahoma, is one of the most popular and recognizable state songs in history. Rogers and Hammerstein's epic musical broke all Broadway box office records when it opened in 1943 and they were awarded a Pulitzer Prize for their collaborative work.

Cyber Cafe

The Cyber Cafe is open in the Forum Bldg., Room C2. Drop in to check your e-mail or surf the internet. It is open daily from 6 a.m. to 12 a.m. It closes on Thursday at 3 p.m.





SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR...

Monday, May 23, 2005

6 a.m. - 8 a.m.	Breakfast, Couch Cafeteria
8 a.m. - 11 a.m.	Golf, Jimmy Austin Golf Course
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Croquet, Timberdell Field
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Bowling (adaptive) AMF Bowling Lanes
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.	Bowling (ambulatory) Sooner Lanes
8 a.m.	OKC Zoological Park
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Lunch, Couch Cafeteria
1 p.m.	Nat'l. Cowboy & Western Museum, OKC
1 p.m.	OU Football Tour Gaylord Family-Oklahoma Memorial Stadium
3 p.m. - 5 p.m.	Medal Ceremony OCCE Commons Restaurant
5 p.m. - 7 p.m.	Dinner, Couch Cafeteria
7 p.m. - 9 p.m.	Native American Pow Wow Walker-Adams Mall
9 p.m. - 12 a.m.	Sooner Shindig Forum Building Conference Room A



Partly Cloudy
High 85° / Low 70°
Easterly Winds 10 - 15 mph



Do you have a wheelchair or scooter that needs to be fixed? The Wheelchair Repair room is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Walker Tower to handle repair needs. Staff working in Wheelchair Repair want to make sure you get back to the Games quickly. For after hour emergencies, call Greg Rosales at (405) 409-7082.

For Your Spiritual Health

During the Games, the Chaplain's office is located in Walker Tower, 2 East Study Lounge. Chaplains will be available daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. until Friday, May 27 at noon. Or, you can call (405) 606-9218. For after hours or emergencies (from 5 p.m. to 8 a.m.), please call (405) 606-9220.

SOONER SPIRIT

Want to submit a story idea for the daily *Sooner Spirit*?

The Public Affairs Team will be preparing news releases, writing articles for the daily *Sooner Spirit*, and working with the media to publicize the events of this week.

If you have ideas for news stories, photographs or something you'd like to see in the *Sooner Spirit*, stop by the Media Center located in the Forum Bldg., B Wing.

We'd love to hear from you!



Look for the daily *Sooner Spirit* on the Web at:

www.veteransgoldenagegames.org